

Employment

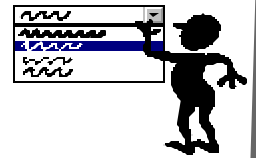
JSEC NEWS

Job Descriptions

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**The
More
You
Know**

An accurate, complete job description is the foundation for hiring the right person for the right job the first time. You need to know the actual skills, knowledge and abilities required to successfully perform the job before you can objectively screen applicants. Since employees are the most important resource of your business, time spent analyzing the job duties for each position will simplify and improve your hiring process as well as help you identify training needs. An accurate, complete job description will also provide you legal protection by showing that your hiring decision is based on consistent, objective criteria. You will be able to support why you hire one applicant over another, why you pay one employee more than another, or why you terminate an employee for poor performance.



How to Start?

Do a job analysis? Job analysis is a method of obtaining important facts about a job. Gather and review information about the job. Talk to current and past employees who actually do the jobs as well as their supervisors. Observe the job being done. Recognize how the position interacts with other positions in the organization and decide if you need to change or reassign any duties to make the job more efficient.



You can also collect standardized information about a job description from secondary sources such as the Occupational Information Network (ONET) which is available through Job Service. ONET is a comprehensive overview of worker characteristics, requirements, and work activities as well as outlook and earnings. Job Service also has other resources available such as Job Descriptions Now, which is a software program designed to provide you with samples of job descriptions and a booklet, Business Basics, which is a step-by-step guide on developing a job description and job analysis. Employers are encouraged to call June Littlefield, at 883-7883, for free job description assistance.

Job descriptions should be written in brief, clear sentences. The basic structure for sentences is "implied subject/verb/object/explanatory phrase." (Example: Compiles statistical reports using Excel software.) Use action verbs to describe the physical and mental tasks to be performed. Focus on the facts—do not overstate or understate requirements.

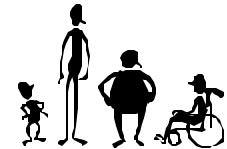
You will have fewer misunderstandings and better employee relationships when the duties and responsibilities of various jobs are clearly communicated.



Discrimination

When writing your job description, avoid requirements that are not job related or that tend to eliminate a group of people. Also avoid words like "recent graduate" or "mature" as these can be interpreted as discriminatory. Discrimination in employment is against the law based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, creed, physical or mental disability, marital status, and political ideas (government). Note that the Montana discrimination laws protect people of all ages as well as marital status. Marital status includes whether a person is married, divorced, separated or single and the identity and occupation of a person's spouse.

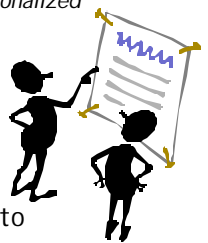
ADA



The Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), which makes it unlawful to discriminate in employment against a qualified individual with a disability, does not require employers to have a written job description. However, having one which focuses on the essential and non-essential functions of the job without specifically stating how these functions must be performed will help you stay out of trouble. It will also allow applicants to screen themselves for qualifications, essential functions and physical demands.

Share your written job description with applicants. Then, ask them if they are able to perform the essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodation. A good place to ask this question is on your job application that applicants sign and date. *A generic job application personalized with your company name asking this question is available through Job Service.*

Disclaimers



Consider using a disclaimer that states that job descriptions are not meant to be all inclusive and that the job itself is subject to change. Some examples are:

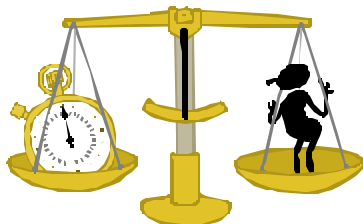
- Nothing in this job description restricts management's right to assign or reassign duties and responsibilities at any time
- This job description reflects management's assignment of essential functions, it does not restrict the tasks that may be assigned
- Other duties as assigned

Determining Essential Functions

Essential functions are the basic job duties that an employee **must be able to perform**, with or without reasonable accommodation. (These are particularly important to review before taking an employment action such as recruiting, advertising, hiring, promoting, or firing.)

Factors to consider in determining if a function is essential include:

- 1 Whether the reason the position exists is to perform that function



- 2 The number of other employees available to perform the function or among whom the performance of the function can be distributed, AND

- 3 The degree of expertise or skill required to perform the function.

Setting Wage Rates

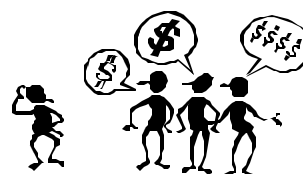
Once you have an accurate job description, you will have a solid basis for comparing the relative amounts of work required and qualifications needed for different positions. This will allow you to establish fairer wage rates and salaries. Some principles to consider include:

- Equal pay for equal work
- Fairness in application of these principles
 - Higher pay for work requiring more knowledge, skill or physical exertion
 - Reasonable pay, in comparison to pay for similar work in other organizations
 - Total earnings reflect, in some way, the employee's contribution to the organization
- Over-qualified employees are generally not paid more than a qualified employee in the same position

One fairly effective rule of thumb you can follow when determining wages is to pay your employees at least as well, if not better than, similar positions in your area. Wages for all other jobs in between can then be set in a reasonable way. If you have questions, please feel free to contact June Littlefield, at Lake County Job Service Workforce Center, 883-7883.

You can obtain labor market information on wage rates in Montana on the Internet at
<http://rad.dli.state.mt.us/>

Other helpful related sites are: www.acinet.org
www.homefair.com



JobLINC

What is JobLINC? JobLINC is the name and common logo given to Montana's workforce system. It brings together, under one symbol, the wide array of providers and service available to both job seekers and businesses throughout the state. The workforce system is designed to integrate a variety of employment and training service providers into a seamless delivery system in order to provide a "no wrong door" approach for customers. In the near future, you may find a JobLINC logo on the doors of service providers.



Other Newsletters

Volume 1

Child Labor Laws/Job Application Inquiries

Volume 2

Employment Retention/Tips on Providing & Checking References

May download at:

jsd.dli.state.mt.us/local/polson

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